**Example of Doctor Preference of Constipation Treatment Flowchart**

Extracted from *The Family Practice Notebook*

*Constipation in Cancer* by Scott Moses, MD

1. See Also
   1. [Bowel Regimen in Chronic Narcotic Use](http://www.fpnotebook.com/GI/Pharm/BwlRgmnInChrncNrctcUs.htm)
2. Causes
   1. Attempt to identify cause
   2. Do not assume [Narcotic](http://www.fpnotebook.com/Pharm/Analgesic/NrctcAnlgsc.htm)s are always the cause
3. Differential Diagnosis
   1. [Bowel Obstruction in Terminally Ill Patient](http://www.fpnotebook.com/HemeOnc/Surgery/BwlObstrctnInTrmnlyIlPtnt.htm)
4. Management: Address each of four factors
   1. See [Bowel Regimen in Chronic Narcotic Use](http://www.fpnotebook.com/GI/Pharm/BwlRgmnInChrncNrctcUs.htm)
   2. Low intestinal solids
      1. Due to decreased [Dietary Fiber](http://www.fpnotebook.com/Pharm/Nutrition/Fbr.htm)
      2. Manage with [Psyllium](http://www.fpnotebook.com/Pharm/Nutrition/Fbr.htm)
         1. Avoid in dehydration due to stool impaction risk
   3. Low stool water content
      1. Causes
         1. Dehydration
         2. Slow stool transit time
         3. Decreased intestinal water secretion
      2. Management
         1. [Lactulose](http://www.fpnotebook.com/GI/Pharm/Lctls.htm) 30 ml PO q4-6 hours
         2. [Sorbitol](http://www.fpnotebook.com/GI/Pharm/OsmtcLxtv.htm) 30 ml PO q2-4 hours until stool
         3. [Glycerin](http://www.fpnotebook.com/GI/Pharm/EmlntLxtv.htm) suppositories
   4. Low gastrointestinal motility
      1. Causes
         1. Non-ambulatory or bed-ridden patient
         2. Neurodegenerative disease
         3. Medications
            1. Morphine and other [Narcotic](http://www.fpnotebook.com/Pharm/Analgesic/NrctcAnlgsc.htm)s
            2. [Tricyclic Antidepressant](http://www.fpnotebook.com/Psych/Pharm/TrcyclcAntdprsnt.htm)s
            3. Scopolamine
            4. [Diphenhydramine](http://www.fpnotebook.com/ENT/Pharm/Dphnhydrmn.htm) ([Benadryl](http://www.fpnotebook.com/ENT/Pharm/Dphnhydrmn.htm))
            5. Vincristine
            6. [Calcium Channel Blocker](http://www.fpnotebook.com/CV/Pharm/ClcmChnlBlckr.htm)s
            7. [Iron Supplementation](http://www.fpnotebook.com/HemeOnc/Pharm/IrnSplmntn.htm)
            8. [Calcium Supplementation](http://www.fpnotebook.com/Renal/Pharm/OrlClcm.htm)
            9. Aluminum salts
      2. Management
         1. [Senna](http://www.fpnotebook.com/GI/Pharm/StmlntLxtv.htm)
         2. [Bisacodyl](http://www.fpnotebook.com/GI/Pharm/StmlntLxtv.htm)
         3. Prune juice
         4. [Casanthranol](http://www.fpnotebook.com/GI/Pharm/StmlntLxtv.htm)
   5. Decreased gastrointestinal lubrication
      1. Due to dehydration
      2. Management
         1. [Mineral Oil](http://www.fpnotebook.com/GI/Pharm/EmlntLxtv.htm) enemas
         2. [Glycerin](http://www.fpnotebook.com/GI/Pharm/EmlntLxtv.htm) suppositories
         3. Dioctyl sodium sulfosuccinate
5. Prevention
   1. See [Bowel Regimen in Chronic Narcotic Use](http://www.fpnotebook.com/GI/Pharm/BwlRgmnInChrncNrctcUs.htm)
   2. Prevention is much easier than treatment
   3. Administer prophylactic medications with [Narcotic](http://www.fpnotebook.com/Pharm/Analgesic/NrctcAnlgsc.htm)s
      1. Gastrointestinal motility [Stimulant Laxative](http://www.fpnotebook.com/GI/Pharm/StmlntLxtv.htm) and
      2. [Stool Softener](http://www.fpnotebook.com/GI/Pharm/EmlntLxtv.htm)
   4. Example Agent: Pericolace
6. References
   1. Hallenbeck (2000) End-of-life Physician Resources #15
      1. <http://www.eperc.mcw.edu>
   2. [Ross (2001) Am Fam Physician 64(6):1019-26](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?cmd=search&amp;db=PubMed&amp;term=Ross%20%20%5bAU%5d%20AND%202001%20%5bDP%5d%20AND%20%20Am%20Fam%20Physician%20%20%5bTA%5d)

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